Checking the poultry rearing in country yards

1554. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) in the light of repeated emergence of bird-flue threats in the country whether Government in coordination with World Health Organization (WHO) and other affected neighbouring countries is taking any steps to inculcate best practices while simultaneously initiating steps to discourage the practice of rearing poultries in the backyard of rural households;

(b) if so, the details of steps taken towards the said two fronts; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has adopted WHO recommended guidelines for managing human cases of Avian Influenza and pandemic preparedness.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has proposed cross-border surveillance for Avian Influenza involving India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal in order to have transparency, exchange of bird flue related information, trade in livestock products and mutual cooperation in control and containment of Avian Influenza. The proposal has been agreed to in-principle.

An Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign has been launched in print media and over television and radio. The campaign has focused on safe poultry practices, preparedness, food safety implications and consuming well cooked chicken and eggs. The poultry industry is also encouraged to carry out similar campaign.

(c) Question does not arise.

Implementation of Swaminathan Committee Report

1555. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Swaminathan Committee recommended several steps for the revival of agriculture;

(b) if so, the salient features of the recommendations;

(c) the details of the progress of implementation, recommendation-wise;

(d) whether it is also a fact that implementation of recommendations is not up to the expected level;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps contemplated by Government to implement the above said recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f) Based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers headed by Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, as contained in the Revised Draft National Policy for Farmers,

submitted by the Commission, the Government has approved the National Policy for Farmers 2007 which has also been laid on the Table of the House in November 2007. Various recommendations made by the Commission for revival of agriculture and allied sectors, as accepted by the Government, have been incorporated in the National Policy for Farmers. These include, *inter alia,* asset reforms in respect of land, water, livestock, fisheries and bioresources; support services and inputs like application of frontier technologies; agricultural biosecurity system; supply of good quality seeds and disease-free planting material; issue of soil health passbooks to the farmers and integrated pest management system; region and crop specific implements and machinery; support services for women like creches, child care centres, nutrition, health and training; timely, adequate and easy reach of institutional credit at reasonable interest rates and farmer-friendly insurance instruments; use of Information and Communication Technology and setting up of farm schools to revitalize agricultural extension; coverage of farmers under a comprehensive national social security scheme; effective implementation of MSP across the country and establishing community foodgrain banks development of agricultural market infrastructure and terminal markets for agriculture; curriculum reforms in agricultural universities; special categories of farming like organic farming and contract farming; rural non-farm employment initiative for farm households; and integrated approach for rural energy, etc.

A very few recommendations of NCF contained in the Revised Draft National Policy for Farmers have not been incorporated in the National Policy for Farmers 2007. These include, *inter alia,* (i) fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) at least 50% higher than the weighted average cost of production — as MSP is recommended by the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) on objective criteria considering variety of relevant factors and a mechanical linkage betwen MSP and cost of production may be counter-productive; (ii) Public Distribution System (PDS) to be made universal — as PDS is a targeted scheme where even off take for BPL families is short against allocation for BPL categories; (iii) establishment of Indian Trade Organisation and National Livestock Development Council at the National level — as the concerned Departments of Government of India opposed to their establishment; (iv) setting up of Agricultural Risk Fund, Market Price Stabilisation Fund and Gram Panchayat Mahila Fund — as Ministry of Finance opined that these should be proposed as schemes to be funded through the normal budgeting process.

Many of the provisions contained in the National Policy for Farmers 2007 are already under implementation by various Central Ministries and Departments and the States through several on-going schemes and programmes. These include, *inter-alia,* Bharat Nirman for improving rural infrastructure and irrigation potential; National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme carrying a legal guarantee of employment; Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana to promote self-employment among the rural poor; National Rural Health Mission; Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme to complete more irrigation projects; pilot projects to repair, renovate and restore water bodies and groundwater recharge programme to divert rainwater into dug-wells; revival of agricultural extension system, reforms in agricultural marketing and development of market infrastructure; establishment of National Horticulture Mission, National Rainfed Area Authority, National Fisheries Development Board, National Bamboo Mission, etc.; expansion of institutional farm credit at reduced rate of interests; Rural Infrastructure Development Fund; Rajeev Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana; and several other initiatives. Government of India has recently launched two new schemes *i.e.* National Food Security Mission to improve production and productivity of foodgrains and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana to incentivize States to

crease public investment in agriculture so as to achieve the targeted growth rate in agriculture. These two schemes are expected to go a long way in operationalising many of the provisions of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007 through state specific de-centralized strategy taking into account the agro-climatic and other local conditions for development of agriculture and allied sectors.

Implementation of Crop Insurance Scheme

†1556. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering on simplification and effective implementation of the Crop Insurance Scheme; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In pursuant to the Union Budget Announcement for 2007-08 a pilot Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) has already been implemented during Kharif, 2007.Rabi 2007-08 in selected areas/crops in the States of Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. The scheme insures farmers against the likelihood of financial loss on account of anticipated loss in crop yield resulting from adverse incidence of weather conditions. The scheme is simple and provides quick compensation to farmers, as it is based on weather indices. The scheme will be continued during Kharif, 2008.

Food Processing Units in Orissa

1557. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, on account of lack of food-processing units in certain districts of Orissa, the farmers have been forced to sell their maize produce at throw-away prices and rains have further played spoilsport for corn farmers of KBK region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action plan of the Centre to help the backward Orissa State both physically and financially to address the above long-standing grievance of the beleaguered farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) No information on the farmers of certain districts of Orissa having been forced to sell their maize produce at throw-away prices due to lack of processing units has been received. However, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) has procured 2400 Metric Tonnes of maize in the scheduled districts of Orissa in the State Government account at Minimum Support Price (MSP) of 620/- per quintal during Kharif-2007-08 season.

Further, in order to promote food processing industries in the country, Government of India is providing financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid for setting up of food

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.